



## Junior Livestock Shows and Auction Guidelines

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As you are all aware, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many fairs in California are being cancelled at the discretion of their Fair Boards or due to the State of California shelter-in-place directive. This situation has raised questions relative to how 4-H members can complete their 4-H goals for the year if fairs, still exhibit competitions, livestock shows, and junior livestock auctions are cancelled.

## Food & Consumer Safety

Due to the rigorous food and consumer safety standards set forth by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) for market animals which are sold at junior livestock auctions, and the time, expertise and preparation needed to meet these standards, the University of California 4-H Youth Development Program is not granting permissions for new 4-H sponsored livestock auctions to take place. This is in accordance with long-standing 4-H policy CA 4-H Policy Handbook, Chapter 7, Part V.

<http://4h.ucanr.edu/Resources/Policies/Chapter7/#V>.

## Alternatives

In the event your fair is cancelled, your Fair Board will determine if alternate opportunities, such as a (virtual) junior livestock show and auction, will be put into place. If your Fair Board determines it will not provide alternate opportunities, a team of 4-H staff are exploring alternative educational activities such as virtual showmanship classes, skill-a-thons, and exhibitions for youth to participate in to demonstrate their educational accomplishments and successfully complete their goals for the year.

## Animal Science and Positive Youth Development

Recognizing opportunities such as virtual showmanship and skill-a-thons do not address the fiscal considerations or concerns associated with livestock projects, we know there is still value in youth participating in livestock projects. Participation in these projects creates opportunities for participants to enhance their skills in accepting responsibility, setting goals, develop[ing] self-discipline, self-motivation, and knowledge of the livestock industry<sup>1</sup>, as well as [developing] responsibility, relating to others, spirit of inquiry, decision making, public speaking, maintaining records, and building self-esteem<sup>2</sup>.

## Weigh your Options

While finances are certainly a component in making the decision to participate in a livestock project, we encourage each 4-H family to weigh the options and make a decision that is right for them. Due to the uncertainty around fairs and livestock programs, this could mean some 4-H members and their families opt out of participating in livestock projects at this time. Should you choose to move forward with a livestock project (later fairs) or if you have already undertaken that endeavor (earlier fairs), we encourage you to look for responsible ways to minimize any personal financial losses.

1. Boleman, C.T. & Cummings, S.R. & Briers, G.E.. (2004). Parents' perceptions of life skills gained by youth participating in the 4-H beef project. *Journal of Extension* [On-line], 42(5). Available at: <https://www.joe.org/joe/2004october/rb6.php>
2. Ward, C. K. (1996). Life skill development related to participation in 4-H animal science projects. *Journal of Extension* [On-line], 34(2). Available at: <http://www.joe.org/joe/1996april/rb2.html>